

Message Text

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SUBJECT: PRESS MATERIAL

1. HERewith FULL TEXT JOHN SAAR BYLINER WASHINGTON POST
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 28, HEADED "CARTER COMMENT ON SOUTH
KOREA CALMS JAPANESE."

2. TOKYO, DEC. 27--PRESIDENT-ELECT JIMMY CARTER HAS
CALMED JAPANESE FEARS THAT HIS PLANNED WITHDRAWAL OF
AMERICAN GROUND FORCES FROM SOUTH KOREA MIGHT TRIGGER A
NEW WAR.

3. FOREIGN MINISTRY OFFICIALS WHO WORRIED THAT HASTY
U.S. MOVES MIGHT "DESTABILIZE" THE DIVIDED KOREAN PENINSULA
AND IGNITE A SECOND WAR THERE WERE RELIEVED BY CARTER'S
COMMITMENT AT A PLAINS, GA. PRESS CONFERENCE LAST WEEK TO
REDUCE TROOPS IN "A VERY SLOW, VERY METHODICAL AND VERY
CAREFUL MANNER."

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4. JAPAN WOULD PREFER AMERICAN MILITARY STRENGTH IN SOUTH
KOREA TO REMAIN AT CURRENT LEVELS, BUT OFFICIALS ARE NOW
RECONCILED TO THE GRADUAL REDUCTION AND WILL PROBABLY NOT
OPPOSE IT IN THE PRIOR CONSULTATION SESSIONS THAT CARTER
HAS PROMISED.

5. MEANWHILE, SOUTH KOREA TODAY RELEASED THREE JAPANESE CITIZENS OF KOREAN ORIGIN WHO WERE SERVING LIFE TERMS FOR SPYING. AT THE INTERVENTION OF PRESIDENT PARK CHUNG HEE, THREE ELDERLY BUSINESSMEN ARRESTED FOR ESPIONAGE IN 1973 AND 1975 WERE RELEASED AND FLOWN BACK TO TOKYO. QUOTING JAPANESE POLITICAL SOURCES, NEWSPAPERS HERE SAID THE RELEASE WAS INTENDED TO CEMENT RELATIONS WITH THE NEW JAPANESE GOVERNMENT OF PREMIER TAKEO FUKUDA.

6. RELIABLE SOURCES SAY JAPAN WILL ASK THE UNITED STATES TO SEEK ASSURANCES OF NONINTERFERENCE FROM CHINA AND THE SOVIET UNION BEFORE BEGINNING THE REDEPLOYMENT FROM SOUTH KOREA. WHILE A FORMAL AGREEMENT IS UNLIKELY, THE SOURCES AGREE, THE TWO COMMUNIST SUPERPOWERS SHOULD PLEDGE NOT TO SUPPORT A NORTH KOREAN INVASION OF THE SOUTH.

7. IN TH" JAPANESE VIEW, THE TIMING AND RATE OF THE WITHDRAWAL WILL REQUIRE SOUND JUDGMENT BY THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION IF THE RISKS OF CONFLICT ARE NOT TO BE INCREASED. VIOLENCE COULD RESULT, JAPANESE OFFICIALS WARN, IF EITHER NORTH OR SOUTH KOREA READS THE DRAWDOWN AS A WEAKENING OF THE AMERICAN SECURITY COMMITMENT.

8. IMMEDIATELY AFTER CARTER'S NOVEMBER ELECTION VICTORY, FORMER PREMIER TAKEO MIKI, THE FOREIGN MINISTER AND THE JAPANESE AMBASSADOR TO THE UNITED STATES VOICED DEEP CONCERN OVER CARTER'S PLANS FOR KOREA. CARTER HAS REAFFIRMED HIS CAMPAIGN PLEDGE TO WITHDRAW GROUND TROOPS WITHIN FIVE YEARS BUT WITH A CAUTION THE JAPANESE FIND REASSURING.
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9. DURING THE CAMPAIGN CARTER SAID HE WOULD GRADUALLY REMOVE GROUND TROOPS FROM AMONG THE TOTAL OF 42,000 AMERICAN SERVICEMEN IN SOUTH KOREA. U.S. AIR AND NAVAL FORCES WOULD NOT BE AFFECTED.

10. THE NEW FLEXIBILITY HERE IS ALSO DUE IN PART TO RECOGNITION BY JAPANESE DIPLOMATS THAT THEY HAVE NO GOOD ALTERNATIVES. JAPAN DOES NOT CONTRIBUTE DIRECTLY TO THE DEFENSE OF SOUTH KOREA AND IS NEITHER WILLING NOR ABLE TO REPLACE DEPARTING AMERICAN TROOPS. THE STATIONING OF JAPANESE TROOPS IN SOUTH KOREA IS AGAINST THE SPIRIT OF THE JAPANESE CONSTITUTION AND WOULD BE UNACCEPTABLE TO THE JAPANESE AND KOREAN PEOPLE.

11. STILL, THERE IS GREAT ANXIETY THAT NO ACTION OR INACTION BE ALLOWED TO DISTURB THE UNEASY PEACE IN KOREA. JAPAN CONSIDERS THE PRESERVATION OF STABILITY--MEANING NO

CONFLICT BETWEEN THE MUTUALLY HOSTILE KOREAS--A VITAL NATIONAL INTEREST. ALTHOUGH IT IS HISTORICALLY THE

JAPANESE WHO HAVE INVADED THE NEIGHBORING PENINSULA, THEY CALL KOREA "THE DAGGER POINTED AT JAPAN."

12. THE TWO COUNTRIES ARE LESS THAN 100 MILES APART, WITH STRONG GEOPOLITICAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL TIES. INFLUENTIAL JAPANESE WARN THAT A REPETITION OF THE 1950-53 KOREAN WAR WOULD ENDANGER THEIR OWN INTERNAL STABILITY. THE 600,000 KOREAN RESIDENTS WOULD PRESENT A SERIOUS SECURITY THREAT AND JAPANESE POLITICS WOULD POLARIZE BETWEEN COMMUNISTS SUPPORTING NORTH KOREA AND THE RIGHTISTS FAVORING THE SOUTH.

13. THE ULTIMATE NIGHTMARE FOR JAPAN IS NEGATION OF THE AMERICAN SECURITY COMMITMENT TO SEOUL, FOLLOWED BY A NORTH KOREAN INVASION AND FORCIBLE COMMUNIZATION OF THE UNCLASSIFIED

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SOUTH.

14. JAPAN HAS NO DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH NORTH KOREA. WITH SOUTH KOREA, HOWEVER, IT HAS STRONG ECONOMIC, POLITICAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL BONDS. IN 1975 JAPAN SENT EXPORTS WORTH \$2.2 BILLION TO SOUTH KOREA AND RECEIVED \$1.3 BILLION IN IMPORTS. JAPANESE CAPITAL INVESTMENTS IN KOREA TOTAL \$640 MILLION, AND ANOTHER \$2.2 BILLION IN OUTSTANDING LOANS IS AT STAKE.

15. THE FALL OF SOUTH KOREA WOULD HAVE PROFOUND REPERCUSSIONS FOR JAPAN, FOREIGN POLICY EXPERTS MAINTAIN. THE SECURITY AND POLITICAL STABILITY OF THE POST-WAR INDUSTRIAL DEMOCRACY JAPAN HAS BECOME UNDER AMERICAN TUTELAGE ARE PREDICATED ON GENERALLY FRIENDLY RELATIONS WITH SOUTH KOREA. COMMUNISM IN THE SOUTH MIGHT LEAD TO A BITTERLY DIVIDED JAPAN, REARMAMENT OR NEUTRALITY.

16. TOKYO FOREIGN MINISTRY OFFICIALS ARE HELPLESS AND UNHAPPY OVER THE STRAIN IN U.S.-SOUTH KOREAN RELATIONS CAUSED BY THE REVELATIONS OF SEOUL'S BRIBERY OPERATION IN WASHINGTON AND PRESIDENT PARK CHUNG HEE'S REPRESSION OF HUMAN RIGHTS. THEY WISH THE AMERICAN SECURITY UMBRELLA COULD BE VIEWED AS SEPARATE AND ABOVE THE AREAS OF DISAGREEMENT.

17. THERE IS CONCERN THAT THE AMERICAN RESOLUTION MAY BE WEAKENING AT A TIME WHEN A DANGEROUS SITUATION IS GRADUALLY IMPROVING. THE PANMUNJOM INCIDENTS LAST AUGUST WHEN NORTH KOREAN BORDER GUARDS KILLED TWO AMERICAN OFFICERS

DEMONSTRATED THE UNPREDICTABILITY AND POTENTIAL FOR
VIOLENCE IN THE KOREAN STAND-OFF. YET NORTH KOREAN PRESI-
DENT KIM IL SUNG'S EXPRESSION OF REGRET WAS INTERPRETED BY
THE JAPANESE AS A HOPEFUL SIGN THAT AS THE SOUTH GROWS

STRONGER, THE NORTH IS BECOMING MORE REALISTIC. (END
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